United Nations E/CN.6/2008/NGO/21

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2007

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-second session
25 February-7 March 2008
Item 3 (a) (i) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women

Statement submitted by Baptist World Alliance, Concerned Women for America, Eagle Forum, Endeavour Forum, Franciscans International, International Right to Life Federation, JMJ Children's Fund of Canada, Real Women of Canada, Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, World Movement of Mothers, Worldwide Organization for Women, World Youth Alliance, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2008/1.

07-65026 (E) 210108

Statement

Thank you for this opportunity to explain the importance of the Billings Ovulation Method of natural fertility regulation, BOM for short, for the health of women everywhere, and why the UN should be actively promoting the teaching of it.

In 1994 the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) stated in its Cairo Report that "under no circumstances should abortion be used as a method of family planning." In spite of this the main thrust of many at the UN since that time has been to seek funding to achieve the exact opposite, namely to have abortion proclaimed as a human right in any circumstances and to hold countries accountable if they do not provide free access to it. On the other hand there is another group at the UN, women like ourselves, who know that abortion is harmful to women, harmful to society and unnecessary for family planning. The Billings Ovulation Method of natural fertility regulation is a simple, effective and cost-free method of either achieving or avoiding pregnancy without resort to chemicals or devices. With its use babies are welcomed and loved and the issue of abortion does not arise.

The promotion of abortion on demand comes at the expense of scientific truth. Suddenly biology text books are changed to state that life no longer begins at fertilization of the ovum but at implantation of the embryo in the endometrium of the uterus instead. This enables promoters to argue that IUDs, the "pill" and other contraceptive medication are not abortifacients. This is manifestly untrue since the endometrium is directly affected by the action of IUDs and by estrogen and progesterone contained in the "pill." Furthermore contraceptive medication does not always suppress ovulation and the resulting undesired pregnancy usually leads to an abortion. Many women who have had abortions learn too late about the consequences: depression, low self esteem, and the damaging effect on their children and marital relationship. In addition to such psychological harm there is actual physical damage: fertility is reduced because the "pill" ages the cervix and increases the risk of cervical cancer. A recent study in Oxford University demonstrates that there is "irrefutable" proof that the likelihood of developing cervical cancer increases with the use of the contraceptive pill (i). Government health warnings should be attached to the "pill" as is the case in many countries for tobacco products. The risk of breast cancer is also increased because the surge in estrogen in the breast cells in the first trimester of pregnancy can result in tumorous action when there is an unnatural termination of the pregnancy which leaves the breast cells in an immature "pregnant" state (ii). Naturally women are devastated by such consequences and angry that they were not warned of the possible risks beforehand, or of the simple way such risks could have been avoided.

The BOM suffers from one huge disadvantage; there is no profit in it for pharmaceutical companies. In fact it is a threat to the profits derived from sale of the pill and other contraceptive devices. So it is in no-one's self interest to promote it. Our mission is simply to make all women aware of this safe and natural method which is embraced by all who learn of it since it is acceptable in all cultures and religions, cost-free, simple to understand and effective at all stages of a woman's reproductive life: adolescence, breastfeeding, pre-menopause and

recovering from emotional and physical stress. It was developed by Drs. John and Evelyn Billings of Australia fifty-five years ago (iii) and validated by Prof. Erik Odeblad (emeritus), a medical bio-physicist, and Professor James Brown, (iv) (v) world renowned for his research on estrogen and progesterone. The latter has conducted nearly a million hormonal essays which provide a wealth of information about women's fertility cycles that he collated in "The Continuum." Likewise, Odeblad has become the world's leading expert on the complexities of the tiny cervix, which is as complicated as the human eye. He studied the way estrogen affects the production of a secretion, vital for sperm survival and transportation, that women notice just as they go about their daily activities and are able to chart according to the BOM's four commonsense guidelines. In spite of the sad death of Dr. John Billings this year, research is ongoing through the Ovulation Method Research and Reference Centre of Australia (OMR&RCA) and can be reviewed on the website: http://www.woomb.org.

China is the prime example of the dramatic drop in the rate of abortion when the authentic Billings Ovulation Method is taught. China now has thousands of accredited teachers and "Billings" has become a household name. In a huge study of couples published in the Chinese Medical Journal in 1998 (vi) only five misunderstood the rules of the Method and became pregnant by the end of the year's study. These five continued to use the Method once the rules they broke were pointed out to them. There was a 99.5% user effectiveness rate when the intention was to avoid pregnancy. Many couples were also successful in using the method to achieve pregnancy. Indeed, Billings teachers all over the world find that they are as frequently consulted to help couples who are having difficulty achieving pregnancy. In 2006 Australian teachers found a 78% effectiveness rate in those couples referred to them because of difficulties in conceiving.

In conclusion, we live in a world in which concerns are mounting over such issues as the impact of increased estrogen in the water systems on the virility of fish; birth rates below population replacement levels in many countries; breakdown of the family as the basic unit of society; condom use touted as a way to reduce HIV/AIDs when only marital fidelity to a life-time partner or abstinence will eradicate it; high cost of abortion leading to the channeling of funds away from real unmet needs of women, especially refugees who are supplied with abortion kits instead of food and water for their families. Many of these issues could be eliminated altogether if there was UN and government political will to make sure women are given the chance to learn the Billings Ovulation Method and to eliminate funding for "reproductive health," the euphemism for abortion. S.Fryer, e-mail: jandsfryer@shaw.ca.

References

(i) "Cervical cancer and use of hormonal contraceptives: a systematic review", *The Lancet* 2003 Vol 361 pp.1159-67. Reviewed by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (Lyon, France), the Cancer Research UK Epidemiology Unit (Oxford, UK), the Institute of Cancer Research (Sutton, Surrey) and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (London).

(ii) Angela Lanfranchi MD (ob/gyn) (http://www.abortionbreastcancer.com).

(iii) Billings, Evelyn L. and Billings, John J., *Teaching the Billings Ovulation Method, Part 2, Variations of the Cycle and Reproductive Health*, Ovulation Method Research and Reference Centre of Australia, Melbourne, 1997.

Billings, Evelyn and Westmore, Ann, *The Billings Method*, Ann O'Donovan Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, 1997.

(iv) Odeblad E. *The Discovery of Different Types of Cervical Mucus and the Billings Ovulation Method Bulletin of the Natural Family Planning Council of Victoria*, Vol 21, No. 3, September 1994.

(v) *Foreword to "Studies on Human Reproduction"* Monograph by James B. Brown, M.Sc., Ph.D., D.Sc., F.R.A.C.O.G.

(vi) *Evaluation of the Effectiveness of a Natural Fertility Regulation Programme in China.*